



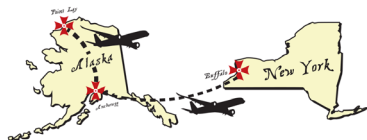
KALI: A Polar Bear's Tale

AUTHOR: CAROLYN MUELLER | ILLUSTRATOR: JEREMY PATTON & JAYNE BALLEW

Chapter Six:

Kali was going to Buffalo, New York! Soon he'd meet a new friend, Luna. Luna was a baby polar bear, just like Kali. She was born at the Buffalo Zoo, hand-raised by keepers, and did not live with other polar bears. Though she played with toys and romped in the winter snow with her keepers, she too needed to learn how to be a polar bear from another polar bear. Since both Kali and Luna were living alone, polar bear keepers at the Alaska Zoo and the Buffalo Zoo agreed that it would be best for the two cubs to grow up together.

When Kali arrived in Buffalo, he was a strong and robust 65-pound bear cub.



However, Kali had been through a lot of changes in his young life, going from his den, to the Alaska Zoo, and then to Buffalo. It was a lot for the little polar bear.

Kali seemed unsure of himself in his new environment. He sucked on his paw, was rowdy during mealtimes, and loudly vocalized at his keepers.

Caitlyn, a polar bear keeper at the Buffalo Zoo, was very patient with the young bear cub and gave him time to adjust. She calmly fed him his formula with a bottle and offered him toys and activities to encourage him to play.

Her patience paid off. A few weeks after Kali arrived in Buffalo, he had calmed down and seemed ready to meet Luna, his new playmate. The keepers set up a "howdy mesh" -- a wall through which the bears could see and smell each other, but could not physically interact. Caitlyn wanted to be sure that the two bears would get along before they were put together.

Luna, raised by human keepers, had never seen another polar bear. When she caught sight of Kali, she was very excited and ran toward the mesh. Poor Kali was scared by this new, energetic bear. He ran away, hiding just out of Luna's sight. For the next few days, Kali cautiously watched Luna playing with her toys and blankets on the other side of the mesh. He saw her black button nose, and her bright eyes. He saw her fluffy, white coat and chubby bear belly. He could smell her and hear her and watch her play. One day, he slowly approached the mesh. Luna was playing with a ball. Kali also began playing with a ball with the mesh in between them. Luna rolled on her back. Kali rolled on his back too, eventually getting brave enough to stick his paws through the mesh! The two bears even touched noses with one another.

Caitlyn watched these behaviors and decided that it was time to put the cubs together. She was nervous, not that the bears would hurt each other, but that the experience would be scary for one or both of them. These bear cubs needed to bond.



Photo Credit: Buffalo Zoo

Ask Zoo Keeper Julie

How far do polar bears travel?

It is thought that most polar bears limit travel to home ranges of a few hundred miles. They have been known to swim up to 60 miles without rest in search of food.

How do polar bears walk on ice?

They have rough surface on the pads of their paws, as well as long claws, which help them to grip the sea ice.

Newspaper Connections

Review several weeks' worth of your community newspaper for animal stories. Based on your review, develop categories for the types of stories that appear in the newspaper and place each story within one.

